

Peter Stone Brown

1205 Wharton Street, Philadelphia PA 19147-4509 (215) 334-0431 E-Mail:
psb51@verizon.net

October 14, 2007

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Gallagher and family,

I am writing to express to you my deepest sympathy and my own great sorrow over the loss of Tom.

I guess I first saw Tom play sometime in the mid to late eighties at JC Dobbs, *the* rock and roll bar in Philly and also the number one hangout for musicians. He was hard not to notice. He had stage presence in spades and was a great player.

Sometime in the mid-nineties we became very good close friends. He was over here a lot, sometimes daily and we started playing music together. He was a joy to play music with. He was fun, but he also had tremendous enthusiasm and endless ideas. To say he was a great guitarist is understating the case. He was a brilliant guitarist. I don't recall ever having to tell him anything, he just instinctively knew what to do. He truly lived and breathed music. He was also a fine singer and a terrific songwriter.

We were both songwriters and enjoyed sharing our newest songs with each other. I'm pretty sure I was the first person to hear "Love Is An Outlaw." He was proud of that song and rightfully so. We did a lot of shows mostly in coffeehouses off South Street as a duo, but when I got a show opening for a national act, Tom helped me organize a band and brought in another player, Tom Heyman of the band Go To Blazes. He lives in San Francisco now and I had the sad task of notifying him of what happened.

I can say that Tom was a brilliant musician not only as a friend and a fellow musician but also as a music journalist.

Tom and I also shared a love of Bob Dylan and I saw him open for Dylan in Newark, Delaware in 1992 playing with another songwriter, Steve Junker. We also went to two out of state Dylan concerts together, one in North Jersey and the other in Virginia near Washington DC.

Our relationship went far beyond music and we talked often for hours, sometimes here in my living room, many times on the phone about all kinds of things from our lives to politics. Still music was the thing that excited him most and I remember him calling and talking for hours about some new release.

As was the case with anyone who knew him closely, I was well aware of his problems and his demons and tried my best to help him. Sometimes he would listen, sometimes he wouldn't. There was a period when if I knew he was coming over (sometimes he'd just show up) I would hide any alcoholic beverage that may have been in the house before his arrival.

When he went on his cross-country trip in the late nineties, I was one of many people who received daily late night/early morning phone calls. I want you to know that many of his friends were extremely concerned and we had several discussions of what we could do, but he was across the country, and we never knew where he'd be going next, and most of us just didn't have the resources to deal with it.

I didn't see Tom as much in this decade. He did come out to a couple of my shows and every now and then we'd phone or email. He asked me to make copies of a bunch of Dylan shows for him which I did, but he never came to

pick them up. I'd tell him "I can mail them Tom, it's no problem," and he's say, "No, I'll come down, man."

In 2006, I was helping another local songwriter, Kenn Kweder organize a Bob Dylan tribute to held on Dylan's birthday. I told him of course, and also told him, why don't you back me up on my songs. He came down, finally picked up the CDs I'd made for him and we had a great time. At the show, he was just ecstatic. He hadn't performed before an audience in years and was just so happy to be performing again. That night was the last time I saw him.

I think the next week I talked to him, and he told me that after the show, instead of going home, he went on a bender. I did let him know I was not very happy about that. The next time I talked to him, he was quite depressed. He'd broken his leg (or ankle) and said it was bad but wouldn't talk about it. It took me months to find out what happened.

There hasn't been an hour in the past week that I haven't thought about him. I wish I could have helped him more and I really wish he'd called me that last Saturday night, but he didn't.

I am grateful however that my memory of my last time with him was a good one. I loved him and will miss him more than I can express.

I share with you in your grief and sorrow. I hope this letter of my memories and feelings for Tom will somehow help you through this time. If there is anything I could possibly do for you, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

Peter Stone Brown

